

At Dusk

Starved wolves and bears slink away
from large, silent men in goggles,
machine guns lashed to their backs,
who zigzag skiis between still pines
to stare across a northern border
at one another.

While in a country nearer the sun,
the old people of a wine village
walk after supper to a small park
to watch carousal lights go around
and listen to its music and listen
to descendants.

How does any philosopher ever sleep?

The Guest

If one day you are walking along
and suddenly decide to ring the bell
of a lower front flat near the center
of the city, and you do, and a woman
in a paisley housedress answers, asks
what you want and you can't think of
anything to say, just stand there
until finally she smiles, says you
must be Margie's friend and Margie
ain't home yet from whatchacallit,
beauty school, come inside and wait,
and you walk into a coffiny parlor,
nod at a chairbound old crone who
smells like wet carpets, sit paging
Life for May 7, 1963 and listening
to the paisley woman wonder from
the kitchen whether you've ate yet
and enjoy sauerkraut -- and as you
say no you haven't and yes you do,
although you hate it, the door opens
and a girl in white with improbably-
colored hair, gum, and a rather nice
figure comes in, says hi and you say
hi and start to introduce yourself
when you hear the housedress coming,
ask instead to use the bathroom,
follow the shrug and forefinger
into the dining room (nodding at
the paisley on the way), then duck